

# National Training for Counselors and Mentors



Funding Education  
Beyond High School

Academic Year  
2017–2018



# Student Dependency Status



# What Makes a Student Independent?

- Born before 1/1/94 (for 2017–2018 year)
- Married
- Graduate or professional student



# What Makes a Student Independent?

- Active duty military for purposes other than training
- Veteran



# What Makes a Student Independent?

- Children who receive more than half support from you
- Dependents other than children or spouse



# What Makes a Student Independent?

- Orphan, foster care, dependent/ward of the court
- Emancipated minor
- Legal guardianship



# What Makes a Student Independent?

- Homeless or self supporting and at risk of being homeless
  - As determined by agency specified in FAFSA instructions
  - Decision determined by Financial Aid Administrator

# Dependency Information-

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/dependency>

Prepare for College


Types of Aid

Who Gets Aid

FAFSA: Applying for Aid

How to Repay Your Loans

Home » [FAFSA: Applying for Aid](#) » [Filling Out the FAFSA](#) » Dependency Status



For purposes of applying for federal student aid, what's the difference between a dependent student and an independent student?

Read the definitions, find out who has to provide parent information on the FAFSA®, and learn what to do if you aren't in contact with your parents.

Your dependency status determines whose information you must report on the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA®\)](#).

- If you're a dependent student, you will report your and your parents' information.
- If you're an independent student, you will report your own information (and, if you're married, your spouse's).

The federal student aid programs are based on the concept that it is primarily your and your family's responsibility to pay for your education. And because a dependent student is assumed to

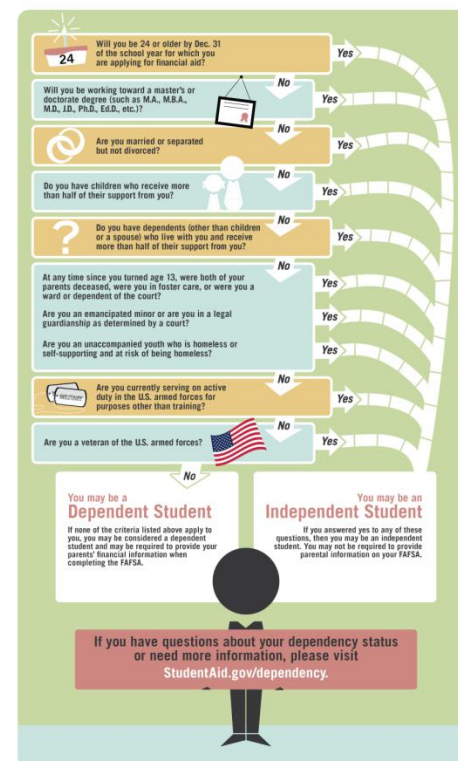
Quick Links

- [Reporting Parent Information](#)
- [How Aid is Calculated](#)
- [Estimate Your Aid](#)
- [Basic Eligibility Criteria](#)

Resources

## Do I Have to Provide My Parents' Information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)?

All applicants for federal student aid are considered either "independent" or "dependent." Dependent students are required to include information about their parents on the FAFSA. By answering a few questions, you can get a good idea of which category you fit into.



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StudentAid.gov

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# Dependency Overrides

- Financial Aid Administrators have authority to change the filing status from dependent to independent
- Student must present documentation of situation



# Dependency Overrides

- Special circumstances:
  - Abuse at home
  - Abandonment by parents
- NOT considered special circumstances:
  - Parents don't claim student on taxes
  - Student does not live with parents and supports self
  - Parents don't want to help pay for college
  - Parents refuse to provide information for FAFSA



# Dependency Overrides

Documentation from third party:

- Teacher
- Social worker
- Member of clergy
- Court system
- Law enforcement



# **Completion of FAFSA Without Parental Information**



# No Access to Parental Information

- FAFSA asks whether student will provide parental data
- If no, student indicates he or she meets special circumstances criteria
- Student can submit FAFSA without parent information
- FAFSA will have reject code
  - Student needs to work with the school to complete application



# Parents Refuse to Provide Information

- Student indicates situation on FAFSA, choosing option that he or she is applying only for an unsubsidized loan
- Student submits FAFSA without parental information
- EFC not calculated
- Student must contact the school regarding documentation and a decision



# **Who Qualifies as a Parent for a Dependent Student?**

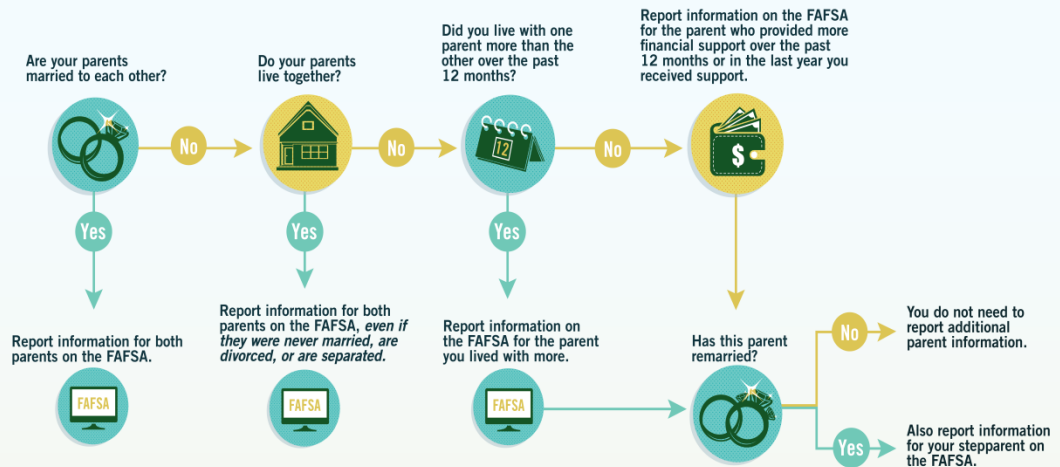


# Who Is a Parent - Infographic

## WHO'S MY PARENT WHEN I FILL OUT MY FAFSA®?

Dependent students are required to report parent information on the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*.<sup>1</sup> For reporting purposes, "PARENT" means your legal (biological or adoptive) parent or stepparent, or a person that the state has determined to be your legal parent.

Use this guide to figure out which parent's information to include (depending on your family situation).



The following people are not your parents unless they have legally adopted you:



Widowed Stepparent



Grandparents



Foster Parents



Legal Guardians



Older Brothers or Sisters



Aunts or Uncles

If you're not sure whom to report as a parent, you can visit [StudentAid.ed.gov/afsa/filling-out/parent-info](https://StudentAid.ed.gov/afsa/filling-out/parent-info) or call 800-4-FED-AID (800-433-3243).

<sup>1</sup> If you're not sure whether you are a dependent student, go to [StudentAid.gov/afsa/filling-out/dependency](https://StudentAid.gov/afsa/filling-out/dependency)

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# Who Is a Parent?

- Biological parents
- Adoptive parents
- Stepparents, if they are married to the student's biological or adoptive parent and the student is included in their household size



# Who Is Not a Parent?

- Foster parents
- Legal guardians who have not adopted the student
- Any Relatives (including grandparents) who have not adopted the student
- Stepparents who have not adopted the student and who would be the only person providing parental information



# Case Study: Vicki

1. Vicki's parents are divorced. She lives with mom and only stays with dad a few weeks during the summer.
2. Vicki's dad makes more money than her mom.
3. Vicki now lives half time with dad, half time with mom.



# Case Study: Vicki

4. Vicki's mom remarries. Will her stepdad's information go on her FAFSA?
5. Vicki's stepdad has his own kids. Should Vicki leave his information off her FAFSA?



# Case Study: Shawn

1. Shawn's mom passed away, and he doesn't get along with dad. Shawn lives with his older sister and her husband.
2. Shawn's dad is now incarcerated. Should Shawn take a paper FAFSA on a visit for information and a signature?



# Case Study: Carlos

1. Carlos lives with his grandmother to take pressure off his mom.
2. Carlos' grandmother has been named his legal guardian.



# Case Study: Claire

1. Claire is a rising senior and has to create an FSA ID.
2. Claire is worried that she can't complete the FAFSA until her SSI information is verified.



# Case Study: Fred

1. Fred's parents are undocumented but Fred is a U.S. citizen.
2. The FAFSA required parental information but they were not born in the U.S. and he is worried he can't complete the FAFSA.





# Questions/Discussion



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